

DATA TEAM PROTOCOL FOR DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION

Purpose	Assessment coordinators or school principals can use this tool to organize data meetings for grade-level instructional teams. Use the guidelines to help staff understand the purpose, structure, and procedures for conducting data meetings in an RtI tiered intervention system. Begin with an in-service reviewing the practice recommendations on Tier 1 differentiation and Tier 2 progress monitoring, and discuss the school's current progress monitoring practices. Follow up with each grade-level team to model the process.
Materials	<i>Assisting Students Struggling With Reading: Response to Intervention and Multi-Tier Intervention in the Primary Grades</i> , Recommendations 2 (pp. 19-20) and 4 (pp. 26-27). Review these Practice Guide recommendations to learn about how to differentiate instruction based on assessment data and use progress monitoring data to identify students needing additional instruction.
Media	<p><i>Tier 1 Differentiation</i>, video interview with Dr. Carol McDonald Connor about how teachers can group students according to learning needs during regular instruction (5:50 min)</p> <p><i>Progress Monitoring at Tier 2</i>, video interview with Dr. Carol McDonald Connor about how to assess foundational reading skills, select progress monitoring measures, and develop data-driven decision-making rules (5:32 min)</p>
Topic	Response to Intervention in Primary Grade Reading
Practice	Progress Monitoring and Differentiation

Data Team Protocol for Differentiating Instruction

In-Service

To review recommended Tier 1 differentiation and Tier 2 progress monitoring practices, provide copies of Recommendations 2 and 4 from the Practice Guide and listen to the two expert interviews with Dr. Connor. Clarify staff understanding of the essential role of progress monitoring and differentiation in RtI.

Hand out copies of Pennsylvania's *Data Analysis for Instructional Decision-Making: Team Process* script. Carefully explain each step in the data team process and encourage staff to voice questions and concerns about implementing a team process at the school. Encourage grade-level staff to gather informally after the in-service to share ideas and prepare for data team meetings.

Follow-Up Guidance Meeting

Follow the in-service by scheduling a meeting with each grade-level team to model and guide them through the data team process using progress monitoring data for individual students receiving interventions. Begin by using the steps outlined in the script.

After the first run-through of the process, solicit ideas from staff on adapting the process to better suit students' needs. Record these suggestions for the building-level RtI team to use in finalizing a tailored framework for data team meetings.

The team process script presented below is used by the Pennsylvania Training & Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) to help schools structure data team meetings. The script suggests detailed steps for planning and conducting meetings. Part I describes steps for the initial fall goal-setting and instructional planning session. Part II outlines steps for quarterly benchmark or follow-up meetings. Interim steps to be conducted between meetings are outlined.

Data Analysis for Instructional Decision-Making: Team Process Script*

Part I. Initial/Fall Goal Setting and Instructional Planning Session

Before the data team meeting:

- Data sets/packets are prepared for meeting in teacher-friendly format with and without student names.
- Data are provided to the team (teachers and other school personnel) in advance.
- Session facilitator (permanent) is identified by the principal/designee, and is trained in team facilitation.
- Meeting logistics, including the date/time, place, and an agenda, are arranged by principal or designee.

During the meeting:

Tier 1		
Procedure	Typical Prompts	Record Keeping
Team uses district-provided data sets.	Team is provided with data to be analyzed.	Data sets in question. Use formats without student names.
<p>Team identifies current performance of grade-level cadre (particular to school) on relevant benchmark for grade and time of year. Note if grade level and individual students made substantial growth (at least a year).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading measure (% at benchmark [low risk], % strategic [some risk], % intensive [high risk]) 	Facilitator: "Let's analyze how our students are doing on (<i>benchmark skill</i>)."	Summarize salient data on the Screening and Intervention Record Form (SIRF).
<p>Team sets a measurable goal or goals to achieve by the next review point.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal should be stated in terms of % of students making x (give a number) progress toward identified benchmark. • Example: "By ----, ----% of students will attain the benchmark of ----- or above." <p>Averages, which provide very broad information about group strengths/needs. This will help to identify skills to address.</p>	"What goal(s) shall we aim for by our next review point?"	Record measurable goal(s) in correct format on SIRF.

**Pennsylvania Data Analysis Team Script*. Revised February 2008. De Kovalski, J. F., & Pedersen, J. (2008). Best practices in data analysis teaming. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology*, V. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.

Team selects instructional strategies that directly address the benchmark and may select strategy to address target areas.	“Let’s list some effective strategies that will assist our students to meet our goal(s).”	Use newsprint to record ideas.
<p>Team analyzes suggested instructional strategies according to the following filters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy should be evidence based. • Strategy should be practical. • Curricular materials should be available to implement strategy or can be readily created. 	<p>“Let’s rate these ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which ones have a good research base? • Of those, which ones are most practical? • What materials do we have available? • What materials do we need?” 	Annotate newsprint of ideas.
Team selects strategies and agrees to implement them during coming intervention period.	“Based on what we see on the display, what’s our choice for the best strategy(ies)?”	Write an explicit description of the strategy on the SIRF.
<p>Team plans logistics of implementing strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team assists all teachers in learning strategy (if not already used) using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ peer modeling and coaching ○ grade-level “chats” regarding implementation ○ assistance by content specialists, school psychologist, etc. • Team locates or creates instructional materials. • Team plans for self-monitoring of use of strategy. • Time to create/adapt materials. • Strategies for teaching strategies to novice teachers (e.g., peer coaching, modeling). 	<p>“As a team, how can we make this really happen for our students?”</p> <p>“What do we have to do to make sure we all use this strategy as planned?”</p> <p>“Who can help us with implementation and how will we know that we are on track?”</p>	Annotate the SIRF with “to-do’s.”

Tier 2		
Procedure	Typical Prompts	Record Keeping
<p>Team identifies which students will be considered for Tier 2 interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all available data on these students (e.g., proficiency lists or data spreadsheet containing all assessment data). Identify students who are in each section (upper and lower ends) of the “emerging” or “strategic” area of the distribution on the most recent benchmark tests. Check for corroboration across different subtest or assessment measures. Decide which students need Tier 2 interventions. 	<p>“Which students do we really have to watch this quarter?”</p> <p>“How far behind are these students?”</p> <p>“What has been their slope since the last assessment?”</p> <p>“How do the reading scores compare with scores on other assessments?”</p> <p>“Which students do we think will get to benchmark without extra supports?”</p> <p>“Which students will need Tier 2 supports this quarter?”</p>	<p>Data sets in question. Use formats with student names and data from ongoing performance monitoring.</p> <p>Record names on SIRF.</p>
<p>Team sets a measurable goal to achieve by the next review point for each student identified for Tier 2 supports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal for each student should be stated in terms of the desired score to be attained by the next benchmark assessment (typically the next benchmark score). 	<p>“What goal(s) shall we aim for by our next review point for this student?”</p>	<p>Annotate measurable goal(s) in correct format on SIRF.</p>
<p>Team selects the standard protocol strategy that they feel best matches to the student’s identified area of need in Tier 2.</p>	<p>“Let’s discuss which standard protocol strategy matches this student’s needs best.”</p>	<p>Record strategy on SIRF.</p>
<p>Team plans logistics of implementing strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team identifies the instructional group in which the intervention will occur. Team identifies frequency and duration (amount of time each day) of the intervention. Team plans for self-monitoring of use of strategy. 	<p>“What standard protocol intervention group shall we use for this student?”</p> <p>“When and how often will the intervention be delivered?”</p> <p>“What do we need to do as a team to make this really happen for our students?”</p> <p>“What do we have to do to make sure we all use this strategy as planned?”</p> <p>“How will we know that we are on track?”</p>	<p>Annotate the SIRF with “to-do’s.”</p> <p>Use standard protocol checklist to determine fidelity of intervention.</p>

<p>Team plans for progress monitoring (at least twice per month).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress monitoring for skills such as comprehension or vocabulary will need team consideration and may be based on the Standard Protocol Intervention selected. 	<p>“How will we measure their progress?”</p> <p>“Who will conduct this assessment?”</p>	<p>Annotate SIRQ with progress monitoring plan.</p>
Tier 3		
Procedure	Typical Prompts	Record Keeping
<p>Team identifies which students will be considered for Tier 3 interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all available data on these students using lists or spreadsheet. Identify students who are in the “deficient” or “at risk” area of the distribution on the most recent benchmark tests. Check for corroboration across different subtest or assessment measures. Review all available progress monitoring data for each student's rate of improvement (slope). Decide which students need Tier 3 interventions. 	<p>“Which students are the most deficient on our lists?”</p> <p>“How far behind are these students?”</p> <p>“What has been their slope since the last assessment?”</p> <p>“How do the reading scores compare with other assessments?”</p> <p>“Which students will need Tier 3 supports this quarter?”</p>	<p>Data sets in question. Use formats with student names and data from ongoing performance monitoring.</p> <p>Record names on SIRQ.</p>
<p>Team sets a measurable goal or goals to achieve by the next review point for the students identified for Tier 3 supports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal for each student should be stated in terms of the desired score to be attained by the next benchmark assessment as well as the expected rate of improvement (slope), or improvement on specific skill related to other assessment data. 	<p>“What goal(s) shall we aim for by our next review point for this student?”</p>	<p>Annotate measurable goal(s) in correct format on SIRQ.</p>
<p>Team selects the standard protocol strategy that they feel best matches to the student's identified area of need in Tier 3.</p>	<p>“Let's discuss which standard protocol strategy matches this student's needs best.”</p>	<p>Record strategy on SIRQ.</p>

<p>Team plans logistics of implementing strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team identifies the instructional group in which the intervention will occur. Team identifies frequency and duration (amount of time each day) of the intervention. Team plans for self-monitoring of use of strategy. 	<p>“What standard protocol intervention group shall we use for this student?”</p> <p>“When and how often will the intervention be delivered?”</p> <p>“What do we need to do as a team to make this really happen for our students?”</p> <p>“What do we have to do to make sure we all use this strategy as planned?”</p> <p>“How will we know that we are on track?”</p>	<p>Annotate the SIRF with “to-do’s.”</p> <p>Use standard protocol checklist to determine fidelity of intervention.</p>
<p>Team plans for progress monitoring (at least once per week).</p> <p>Progress monitoring for skills such as comprehension or vocabulary will need team consideration and may be based on the Standard Protocol Intervention selected.</p>	<p>“How will we measure their progress?”</p> <p>“Who will conduct this assessment?”</p>	<p>Annotate SIRF with progress monitoring plan.</p>
<p>Team sets next meeting date.</p>	<p>“When shall we meet again to review our progress?”</p>	<p>Annotate next date on SIRF.</p>

Interim Steps (between meetings):

- Monitor fidelity of intervention.
- Monitor student’s progress.
- Change (fine-tune) strategy (may or may not require team meeting—teachers are encouraged to continue to adjust instructional “practice” based on classroom performance and observation).

Data Analysis for Instructional Decision-Making: Team Process Script***Part II. Quarterly Benchmark (Follow-up) Meetings****Before the meeting:**

- Team accesses students' new progress monitoring data.
- Data are provided to the team (teachers and other school personnel) in advance.
- Session facilitator is identified by the principal/designee, and is trained in team facilitation.
- Meeting logistics, including the date/time, place, and an agenda, are arranged by principal or designee.

During the meeting:

Tier 1		
Procedure	Typical Prompt	Record Keeping
Team compares new data to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present grade-level goal • Appropriate benchmark for grade and time of year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ % at risk ○ % some risk ○ % low risk • Proficiency levels from assessments 	"Let's analyze how our students are doing on (<i>benchmark skill</i>)."	Summarize salient data on SIRF.
Team evaluates effectiveness of strategies used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gains were clearly linked to strategies for all students. • Strategies worked for some students and not others. • Strategies worked poorly. • Strategies were not implemented with fidelity (as planned). 	"How did our strategies work this past quarter?"	Record successful and unsuccessful strategies.
Team sets a measurable goal or goals to achieve by the next review point. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal should be stated in terms of % of students making x progress (give a number) toward identified benchmark or % of students scoring Proficient or above. 	"What goal(s) shall we aim for by our next review point?"	Annotate measurable goal(s) in correct format on SIRF.

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<p>Team decides on continuation of existing strategies or selects new ones. If new strategies are designed, analyze with filters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy should be evidence based. • Strategy should be practical. • Curricular materials are available to implement strategy or can be readily created. <p>Note: Strategies may need to change because instructional targets have advanced.</p>	<p>“Based on where our students are now, shall we keep our existing strategy or plan for another?”</p>	<p>Write an explicit description of the strategy on the SIRF.</p>
<p>Team plans logistics of implementing strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team assists all teachers in learning strategy (if not already used) using: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ peer modeling and coaching ○ grade-level “chats” regarding implementation ○ assistance by specialists (Title I, literature leader, school psychologist) • Team locates or creates instructional materials. • Team plans for self-monitoring of use of strategy. 	<p>“What do we have to do to make sure we all use this strategy as planned?”</p> <p>“Who can help us with implementation?”</p> <p>“How will we know that we are on track?”</p>	
Tier 2		
Procedure	Typical Prompts	Record Keeping
<p>Team reviews progress of students who have received Tier 2 interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all scores for each student using lists or data spreadsheet. • Check for corroboration across different subtest or assessment measures. 	<p>“How did our students do in Tier 2 this quarter?”</p> <p>“How far behind are these students?”</p> <p>“What has been their slope since the last assessment?”</p> <p>“How do the reading scores compare with other assessments?”</p>	<p>Data sets in question. Use formats with student names and data from ongoing performance monitoring.</p>
<p>Team evaluates effectiveness of strategies used, to determine if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gains are clearly linked to strategies for each student. • Strategies worked for some students and not others. • Strategies worked poorly. • Strategies were not implemented as planned. 	<p>“How did our strategies work this past quarter?”</p> <p>“Did we implement the plan with fidelity?”</p>	<p>Progress monitoring data on each student.</p> <p>Completed level-of-implementation protocols.</p>

<p>Team decides which students need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued Tier 2 interventions Tier 3 interventions To discontinue Tier 2 interventions 	<p>“Which students have hit or are near benchmark and will be OK without Tier 2 supports?”</p> <p>“Which students are making some gains, but will continue to need Tier 2 supports this quarter?”</p> <p>“Which students are falling further behind and need a more intensive intervention (Tier 3)?”</p>	<p>Record names on SIRF.</p>
<p>Team sets a measurable goal or goals to achieve by the next review point for the students identified for Tier 2 or 3 supports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal for each student should be stated in terms of the desired score to be attained by the next benchmark assessment (typically the next benchmark score), or improvement on specific skill related to other assessment data. 	<p>“What goal(s) shall we aim for by our next review point for this student?”</p>	<p>Annotate measurable goal(s) in correct format on SIRF.</p>
<p>Team selects the standard protocol strategy that they feel best matches to the student’s identified area of need in Tier 3.</p>	<p>“Let’s discuss which standard protocol strategy matches this student’s needs best.”</p>	<p>Record strategy on SIRF.</p>
<p>Team plans logistics of implementing strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team identifies the instructional group in which the intervention will occur. Team identifies frequency and duration (amount of time each day) of the intervention. Team plans for self-monitoring of use of strategy. 	<p>“What standard protocol intervention group shall we use for this student?”</p> <p>“When and how often will the intervention be delivered?”</p> <p>“What do we need to do as a team to make this really happen for our students?”</p> <p>“What do we have to do to make sure we all use this strategy as planned?”</p> <p>“How will we know that we are on track?”</p>	<p>Annotate the SIRF with “to-do’s.”</p> <p>Use standard protocol checklist to determine fidelity of intervention.</p>
<p>Team plans for progress monitoring: Tier 3-weekly.</p> <p>Progress monitoring for skills such as comprehension or vocabulary will need team consideration and may be based on the Standard Protocol Intervention selected.</p>	<p>“How will we measure their progress?”</p> <p>“Who will conduct this assessment?”</p>	<p>Annotate SIRF with progress monitoring plan.</p>

Tier 3		
Procedure	Typical Prompts	Record Keeping
<p>Team reviews progress of students who have received Tier 3 interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all scores for each student using lists or spreadsheet. Check for corroboration across different subtest or assessment measures. 	<p>“How did our students do in Tier 3 this quarter?”</p> <p>“How far behind are these students?”</p> <p>“What has been their slope since the last assessment?”</p> <p>“How do the reading scores compare other assessments?”</p>	<p>Data sets in question. Use formats with student names and data from ongoing performance monitoring.</p>
<p>Team evaluates effectiveness of strategies used, to determine if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gains are clearly linked to strategies for each student. Strategies worked for some students and not others. Strategies worked poorly. Strategies were not implemented as planned. 	<p>“How did our strategies work this past quarter?”</p> <p>“Did we implement the plan with fidelity?”</p>	<p>Progress monitoring data on each student.</p> <p>Completed level-of-implementation protocols.</p>
<p>Team decides which students need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued Tier 3 interventions. To discontinue Tier 3 interventions and return to only Tier 2 supports. To be referred for an evaluation for special education eligibility. 	<p>“Which students have made good progress and will be OK without Tier 3 supports?”</p> <p>“Which students are making some gains, but will continue to need Tier 3 supports this quarter?”</p> <p>“Which students are falling further behind and need to be referred for a multi-disciplinary evaluation?”</p>	<p>Record names on SIRF.</p>
<p>Team sets a measurable goal or goals to achieve by the next review point for the students identified for Tier 2 or 3 supports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal for each student should be stated in terms of the desired score to be attained by the next benchmark assessment (typically the next benchmark score), or improvement on specific skill related to other assessment data. 	<p>“What goal(s) shall we aim for by our next review point for this student?”</p>	<p>Annotate measurable goal(s) in correct format on SIRF.</p>

Team selects the standard protocol strategy that they feel best matches to the student's identified area of need in Tier 3.	"Let's discuss which standard protocol strategy matches this student's needs best."	Record strategy on SIRF.
Team plans logistics of implementing strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team identifies the instructional group in which the intervention will occur. • Team identifies frequency and duration (amount of time each day) of the intervention. • Team plans for self-monitoring of use of strategy. 	"What standard protocol intervention group shall we use for this student?" "When and how often will the intervention be delivered?" "What do we need to do as a team to make this really happen for our students?" "What do we have to do to make sure we all use this strategy as planned?" "How will we know that we are on track?"	Annotate the SIRF with "to-do's." Use standard protocol checklist to determine fidelity of intervention.
Team plans for more frequent monitoring (Tier 2-monthly; Tier 3-weekly).	"How will we measure their progress?" "Who will conduct this assessment?"	Annotate SIRF with progress monitoring plan.

Interim Steps (between meetings):

- Monitor fidelity of intervention.
- Monitor student's progress.
- Change (fine-tune) strategy (may or may not require team meeting—teachers are encouraged to continue to adjust instructional "practice" based on classroom performance and observation).